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Atari Online News, Etc.
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"Saying it like it is!"

Until next time...

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And though the game is roughly 30 years old, gamers are still discovering

some of the title s funky little secrets.

RetroCollect, a site dedicated to old-school gaming, recently published a clip of what appears to be a never-before-seen glitch from the Nintendo classic and a handy one at that.

Assuming the video is legit and not some elaborate ruse created by a gamer with too much time on his hands, the trick is pretty nifty. First off, you'll need to play a two-player game and beat the game. That will allow you to play a second quest in which the enemies are slightly different.

From RetroCollect:

First, you must first take player one's Mario to the second level of the game and throw away your first life. With Luigi taking over, player two must traverse all the way to World 5-2 and find the hidden beanstalk block halfway through the stage. Once there, Luigi must start climbing the vines, however, he must await - and take on the chin - an incoming projectile from one of the Hammer Bros. Upon being hit, once player one resumes control of Mario, the beanstalk from World 5-2 will start growing in World 1-2, providing all you need to infinitely kick shells for unlimited bonuses.

So, to summarize, the oft-neglected Luigi must sacrifice himself so that his glory-hound brother can score unlimited lives and play forever. Typical.

Will this discovery change the way games are made, played, or marketed? Well, no. But it does serve as a reminder to developers and studios that the best games will inspire players to hunt high and low for tricks and glitches far into the future.

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->A-ONE Gaming Online      -      Online Users Growl & Purr!
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Atari's Comeback Strategy

Atari may have set the stage for the video game revolution in the 1970s and 1980s, but that did not prevent the company from eventually going bankrupt. Now Atari is back, according to its new owners.

The company has unveiled its new corporate strategy as an interactive entertainment production company. Atari plans to succeed via online video games, online casinos, exclusive video content and a licensing business that includes hardware and apparel.

Atari's press release also said that the company will continue its hardware licensing business, with the goal of operating the most promising ventures at a later stage.

The company further said that it is extending its classic gaming brands to various platforms, including mobile (iOS and Android), PC, online and other digital mediums. It will also seek to capitalize on other markets and new audiences, which are said to include LGBT, social casinos, real-money gambling and YouTube, with exclusive video content.

Fred Chesnais, chief executive officer of Atari, said:

Atari is more than a game publishing company; it's an iconic brand that has established a passionate and timeless culture. Known across multiple generations around the world, Atari will continue to embrace all audiences. ... We're looking forward to delivering on our new strategy and engaging with our audience in new ways across multiple channels as the next era of Atari unfolds. We are leading a rebuilding exercise in a highly volatile industry, so at the same time we are also aware of the challenges that lay ahead.

Back in April, Atari issued another press release, announcing the launch of the game called Minimum, a third-person multiplayer online combat game.

World's Largest Video Game Collection Sells for \$750,000

The world's largest video game collection has found a new home.

Michael Thomasson's epic collection, which includes more than 11,000 unique games, was sold for a whopping \$750,250 at auction this week. While the name of the winning bidder (who goes by the online handle peeps_10091970) is unknown, he or she is now the proud owner of a Guinness certificate proving that the collection is the world's largest, a lifetime subscription to RETRO magazine, and enough video games to last several lifetimes.

The auction pulled in 56 bids, but the majority of those were between peeps_10091970 and another bidder using the online alias catch123. The two began their battle at the \$150,000 mark.

The bidding escalated so quickly that even cash-rich Oculus founder Palmer Luckey (who put in bids for \$50,000 and slightly more than \$90,000) quickly backed out.

Of course, any auction that hits these sorts of numbers raises legitimacy questions. Peeps has no feedback attached to his/her online identity—a classic red flag—but until there's word otherwise, the collection has been sold. At a rate of about \$68 per game, that's a sizable return on Thomasson's investment. It's also in line with his valuation of between \$700,000 and \$800,000.

Thomasson's collection began in 1998, when he ran a game resale website and managed a retail game store. It's a treasure, for sure, boasting more than 20 complete U.S. sets (that's the system plus every official game). Several thousands of games are still in their original factory shrink-wrap.

Ironically, it's not out of the realm of possibility that Thomasson may hold the record again someday. This was actually his third collection of games. The first he sold in 1989 to buy a Sega Genesis, and then he sold

a larger one in 1998 to pay for his wedding.

It can't be an easy living, but it's certainly proving to be a lucrative one.

31-Year Old Spy Hunter Car Mystery Solved!

So tonight while researching old driving games for that big poster, us Jalops were looking at some of the box/cabinet art for the famous game Spy Hunter. Specifically, we were looking at the car, which I always assumed was just made up for the game. But something clicked for Raph.

I think I've said before that of all the technological promises from my youth, the only thing

Here's what Raph said, over the old, salvaged Minitel system we use for inter-Jalop communications:

Holy crap, I never bothered to wonder what the Spy Hunter car was but... ISDERA?

Now, Isdera (a German acronym for Ingenieurbüro für Styling, DEsign and Racing) isn't the most well-known supercar company, but they did do some dramatic stuff. Like the Emperor 108i, which appears to be the car used on the Spy Hunter artwork.

The Emperor was based on a concept car built for Mercedes-Benz, the CW311. It used a 5L Mercedes-Benz V8 which was potent enough to give it a top speed of 176 MPH. It also had a funky rear-view periscope thing, which seems to have been left out of the Spy Hunter car.

Alas, it doesn't seem like Raph was really the first to make the Spy Hunter-Isdera connection, but I still feel it's important to keep you, dear reader, updated on this breaking 30 year old news.

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A-ONE's Headline News
The Latest in Computer Technology News
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

Darrell Issa's Internet Theory: Net Neutrality Will End Porn

The public pressure for strong regulations keeping Internet providers from picking favorites is growing, and House Republicans don't like it. In a hearing of a House Judiciary subcommittee on Friday, they described net neutrality as a form of government censorship that would prevent technology companies from innovating. Underpinning these arguments was the flawed notion that net neutrality is an idea cooked up by the Federal Communications Commission over the last six weeks, and not the

basis of government policy for more than a decade.

Net neutrality is a seductive slogan, said Bruce Owen, a fellow at the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research. While this was a strange way to describe what is often seen as one of the most boring phrases in history, Owen does sort of have a point: 58 percent of respondents to a recent survey by Consumers Union said they were against allowing Internet service providers to charge companies for preferential treatment. Owen argued the phrase has no real meaning, and compared it to a mutating virus that adapts to attack market freedom in whatever way it can. When asked to provide his own definition, he couldn't come up with one.

Owen was one of three panelists saying that antitrust laws could be used to regulate any problems with Internet governance, essentially proposing that the FCC, which is in the process of developing new rules, be removed from the process altogether. This would leave the Federal Trade Commission in charge. Every Republican member of the committee also supported this idea.

Story: Darrell Issa's Not-Unreasonable Push to Cut Door-to-Door Mail Delivery Columbia Law School professor Tim Wu, the man who coined the phrase net neutrality, was the sole voice of dissent appearing before the panel. His view is that the Internet is too important to be left to economists, and that the government has the responsibility to protect free speech by making sure that certain services aren't favored for political reasons. There are a wide range of non-economic values that I fear the antitrust law simply does not capture, he said. If you have a political bias, it doesn't necessarily give a competitive advantage to the ISP.

Congressman Darrell Issa argued that allowing the government to consider anything but pure economic questions was the same thing as censorship. Pointing out that the FCC doesn't allow profanity on network television, he said that the goal of any Internet regulation would be the same. Under net neutrality, he said, we go back to the Leave It to Beaver times, when you couldn't show two married adults sleeping in the same bed. He noted that on the Internet, by contrast, there are no restrictions on sexually-charged content. When Wu tried to explain that this wasn't the point of net neutrality, Issa cut him off. Net neutrality doesn't exist, he snapped.

But here's the thing: Net neutrality does exist. People arguing against it have consistently said that the imposition of new rules would end a decade of unregulated Internet. But the FCC has had some form of these rules in place for years. Opponents of net neutrality can rightly make the argument that a federal court has twice rejected these rules, but that's different from acting like the whole concept of Internet regulation has suddenly come out of the blue. Comcast, the country's largest cable Internet provider, agreed to comply with the FCC's rules when it acquired NBCUniversal in 2011. It remains bound by those agreements even though a court invalidated the rules in January.

Opponents of stronger FCC rules like to ask for evidence of the problem that net neutrality is trying to solve. You could also flip that question to ask, why change a basic concept that hasn't caused any problems? The reason we haven't had a problem over the last 20 years is that we've had de jure or de facto net neutrality in place, said Wu. I'm going to agree with the policy of if it's not broken, don't fix it.

Supreme Court To Decide Whether Threats Made on Social Media Are Free Speech

The Supreme Court will consider the free speech rights of people who use violent or threatening language on Facebook and other electronic media where the speaker's intent is not always clear.

The court on Monday agreed to take up the case of an eastern Pennsylvania man sentenced to nearly four years in federal prison for posting violent online rants against his estranged wife, law enforcement officials and former co-workers.

A federal appeals court rejected Anthony Elonis' claim that his comments were protected by the First Amendment. He says he never meant to carry out the threats. He claims he was depressed and made the online posts in the form of rap lyrics as a way of venting his frustration after his wife left him.

At his trial, the jury was instructed that Elonis could be found guilty if an objective person could consider his posts to be threatening. Attorneys for Elonis argue that the jury should have been told to apply a subjective standard and decide whether Elonis meant the messages to be understood as threats.

Elonis's lawyers say a subjective standard is appropriate given the impersonal nature of communication over the Internet, which can lead people to misinterpret messages. They argue that comments intended for a smaller audience can be viewed by others unfamiliar with the context and interpret the statements differently than was intended.

The Obama administration says requiring proof of a subjective threat would undermine the purpose of the federal law prohibiting threats.

The high court said it will consider whether conviction of threatening another person under federal law requires proof of the defendant's subjective intent to threaten.

For more than 40 years, the Supreme Court has said that true threats to harm another person are not protected speech under the First Amendment. But the court has cautioned that laws prohibiting threats must not infringe on constitutionally protected speech. That includes political hyperbole or unpleasantly sharp attacks that fall shy of true threats.

The federal statute targeting threats of violence is likely to be used more often in the coming years as our speech increasingly migrates from in-person and traditional handwritten communication to digital devices and the Internet, said Clay Calvert, a law professor at the University of Florida.

Calvert, one of several free speech advocates who submitted a legal brief urging the court to use a subjective standard, said people mistakenly seem to feel that they can get away with more incendiary speech on the Internet, in tweets and in texts.

Elonis' estranged wife testified at his trial the postings made her fear for her life. One post about his wife said, "There's one way to love you but a thousand ways to kill you. I'm not going to rest until your body is a mess, soaked in blood and dying from all the little cuts."

FBI agents visited Elonis at home after the amusement park that fired him contacted law enforcement officials about his posts. After the agents left, Elonis wrote: Little agent lady stood so close, took all the strength I had not to turn the (woman) ghost. Pull my knife, flick my wrist and slit her throat.

The case is *Elonis v. United States*, 13-983.

AT&T Suffers Data Breach

AT&T confirmed Friday that attackers compromised the personal information of an undisclosed number of AT&T Mobility members.

AT&T just revealed that outside attackers allegedly employees of one of AT&T's service providers stole a trove of personal information on AT&T Mobility customers. AT&T says the stolen information includes Social Security numbers and call records, i.e. details about the date, time, duration and other phone number for every phone call customers make. AT&T would not disclose the number of affected users.

AT&T believes that the attackers were seeking to sell stolen AT&T phones on second-hand markets and hacked the AT&T database in order to get unlock codes for the phones, which would let the thieves disconnect the stolen phones from the AT&T network, thus letting the phones reconnect to other mobile networks. This makes the phone far more valuable in secondhand markets.

The AT&T Mobility breach apparently occurred on April 9 through 21, two months ago, but AT&T only just revealed it now, as a California state law requires all companies with 500 or more Californian customers to self-report if they have suffered a data breach.

The good news is, if the criminals are truly most interested in unlocking stolen phones, then only stolen phones are at risk. But because social security numbers were included as well, users should take steps to protect their identity, such as placing an alert on their credit report to watch for fraud.

U.S. Senators Introduce Bill To Expand Wi-Fi Spectrum

Two U.S. senators have introduced legislation aimed at expanding the amount of Wi-Fi spectrum available in a band now designated for intelligent vehicle communications, satellite service and amateur radio.

The legislation, announced Friday by Senators Cory Booker, a New Jersey Democrat, and Marco Rubio, a Florida Republican, would require the U.S. Federal Communications Commission to test the feasibility of opening the upper 5GHz band of spectrum to unlicensed Wi-Fi use.

The WiFi Innovation Act attempts to balance the needs of incumbent users of the 5850-5925MHz band, including growing use of so-called intelligent transportation systems, focused on vehicle safety and traffic information, with a major need for more Wi-Fi spectrum, the senators

said in a statement. The bill encourages users of the band to share spectrum if possible, they said.

Smartphone and tablet users are increasingly using Wi-Fi instead of cellular networks to connect to the Internet, and the upper 5GHz band also holds the potential for delivering new broadband service to low-income communities, Booker said in a statement.

There is a clear and growing demand for increased availability of spectrum, Booker said. We want to see this valuable resource made available for further use by the public. Not only does access to wireless broadband open the door for innovation and transformative new technologies, it helps bridge the digital divide that leaves too many low-income communities removed from the evolving technology landscape and the growing economic opportunities.

The bill would create a study to examine the barriers to Wi-Fi deployment in low-income areas. It would require the FCC to evaluate incentives and policies that could increase the availability of unlicensed spectrum in low-income neighborhoods.

The bill addresses customer demands for mobile broadband, Rubio added.

To meet the demands of our time, action must be taken to ensure spectrum is utilized effectively and efficiently, he said in a statement. This bill requires the FCC to conduct testing that would provide more spectrum to the public and ultimately put the resource to better use, while recognizing the future needs and important work being done in intelligent transportation.

With only weeks before the 2014 campaign season kicks into high gear, the bill is unlikely to pass during this session of Congress. The sponsors could reintroduce the bill during the new session of Congress beginning next January.

The Intelligent Transportation Society of America, a trade group, said it supports an effort to explore technical solutions that would allow Wi-Fi devices to operate in the 5.9GHz band without interfering with these critical safety applications.

The process should happen without arbitrary deadlines ... or political pressure that could influence the outcome, Scott Belcher, president and CEO of ITS America, said in a statement.

Mobile trade group CTIA, as well as tech trade groups the Computer and Communications Industry Association and the Consumer Electronics Association, praised the bill, saying more Wi-Fi spectrum will help meet consumer demand for mobile broadband.

FCC Proposes \$1 Billion Per Year for Wi-Fi in Schools

U.S. schools could get a cool billion to set up Wi-Fi networks to connect more than 10 million more students by the 2015-2016 school year under a new FCC proposal.

Three out of five schools don't have the Wi-Fi they need, yet no money was available for Wi-Fi last year under E-Rate, the U.S. Federal Communications Commission's Internet funding program for schools and

libraries, FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler said Friday in a proposal circulated to the agency's other commissioners.

Wheeler's plan would allocate \$1 billion in E-Rate funds for Wi-Fi next year and another \$1 billion in 2016, with the goal of getting Wi-Fi to more than 10 million additional students in each of those years. It also calls for predictable funding in future years. If the agency takes action this summer, the Wi-Fi upgrades could be in place for the 2015-2016 school year, according to the proposal.

The initial funding would come from \$2 billion that the FCC has determined can be freed from reserve accounts and other sources, the proposal said.

E-Rate was established in 1996 and is too tied to the technologies of that era, according to Wheeler. His plan calls for a transition in funding from technologies such as dial-up and pagers to broadband and Wi-Fi in order to serve students on tablets and other personal devices. In past years, the program has only been able to support Wi-Fi in 5 percent of schools and 1 percent of libraries, Wheeler said. E-Rate provides a total of \$2.4 billion per year in funding.

At the same time, Wheeler called for reforms to tighten control over a program that has been plagued by fraud and corruption. His plan calls for zero tolerance for fraud or abuse, with site inspections and tighter document-retention rules. It would also move the program toward electronic filing of all documents. The modernization plan is the first such proposal in the history of the program, according to Wheeler.

In February, a survey sponsored by technology-in-education group showed 83 percent of U.S. voters would support efforts to bring faster broadband to schools and 69 percent would back the idea even if it required a tax of \$4 per year on their mobile bills.

Apple Unveils Cheaper iMac

On Tuesday morning Apple quietly released a new iMac computer for \$1099, which is \$200 less than the previous cheapest iMac model.

The new iMac retains the same design as the other iMacs, and even has the same screen size — 21.5 inches in diagonal — as an existing model. The \$200 savings come on the inside: As you can see above, the less expensive iMac comes with a slower processor — a 1.4GHz processor, with two cores instead of a beefier one — the 2.7GHz processor with four cores that was previously the cellar option.

A computer's processor largely determines your machine's speed, and helps multi-taskers load and run multiple programs at the same time. The slower the processor, the more difficulty your computer will have running those programs.

So, if you're accustomed to watching Netflix while editing on Photoshop and playing World of Warcraft, the new iMac might not be for you. If you're just looking for a desktop computer to check email and surf the Web, this one might work out.

Other sacrifices: You'll get 500 gigabytes in storage, versus 1 terabyte

in storage (that's 500GB fewer: 1TB is 1000GB). And the graphics card, which is important to gamers, is also a little less high-quality.

The \$1099 iMac gives Apple a more competitive desktop alternative to Windows-based PCs, which are traditionally less expensive than Macs. Despite a shrinking market for both laptop and desktop computers globally, there are still hundreds of millions of PCs sold each year.

The new iMac is available to order now and should be at your door in 24 hours.

Power of Microsoft's Bing An Open Question in Search Industry

Microsoft Corp's new chief executive, Satya Nadella, likes to boast that Bing is growing and powers 30 percent of the Internet search market, making it a worthy competitor to Google Inc.

But within the advertising and research industries that measure and manage search as a business, Microsoft's strength is an open question.

The figures quoted by Microsoft, which include searches by partner Yahoo Inc., are much higher than the rate at which people actually click on the links that a search returns, according to new studies by industry researchers.

The new search data calls into question Bing's effectiveness for advertisers. It also lends support to the argument from some investors that Microsoft should sell Bing.

Microsoft has been in the Internet search business since 1998, and Bing - five years old this month - is its latest and most intense effort to unseat market leader Google. The company initially assumed that its world-class engineers and the sheer scale of its Windows user base would sweep away competitors, but Google has not relinquished any share.

To measure its progress in the search business, Microsoft prefers to cite market share numbers from comScore, which established itself as the prime source for Internet data a decade ago, when reliable numbers were hard to come by, and has long been considered the gold standard.

ComScore said Google sites had 67.6 percent of U.S. searches in May, compared with Microsoft's 18.8 percent and Yahoo's 10 percent, which are both powered by Bing.

ComScore bases its calculations on desktop computer Internet searches by about a million anonymous people in the United States. It does not measure searches on mobile phones or tablets, which are dominated by Google, but it does count searches within the big MSN and Yahoo portals, factors which help explain why Bing has such a significant share.

But advertisers are less interested in searches than what users do with search results. They want traffic to their sites; they care what search result links users click and what sites they visit. In recent years, technology has made that behavior much easier to track.

"Clicks are important because they tell us how well we are capturing (search users') demand, and of course advertisers pay based on clicks,"

said Jason Hartley, group media director at search marketing firm 360i, whose clients include brands such as Coca-Cola and Verizon. ComScore data "can lead you down the wrong path, or it doesn't give you as much insight as you'd like," he added.

A study published last month by Conductor, a company that advises marketers on how to stand out in Web searches and social media, showed Google accounted for 85 percent of traffic to websites from search engines, with only 5 percent from Bing and 7 percent from Yahoo. The study was based on 100 million visits to 63 websites from clicks on search links - not counting ads - including from mobile devices.

Ireland-based StatCounter, which gets data from more than 3 million websites, found Google accounted for 80 percent of search engine-supplied U.S. traffic in the last three months, Bing 10 percent and Yahoo 8 percent. Search marketing firm Define Media Group came up with similar figures based on 1.4 billion visits from search engines so far this year to 125 websites.

Advertisers make the same point with their spending: web marketing firm IgnitionOne estimates that Google gets about 77 percent of web search ad dollars against 23 percent for Yahoo/Bing. Design software maker Autodesk told Reuters that it generally splits search ad spending 80/20 in favor of Google with its "significantly larger pool of users".

The does not mean comScore's data is faulty. Rather, many in the search industry say it doesn't measure what advertisers and website owners want to know, the web traffic generated by a search.

"Their current methodology is likely to mislead those who take it at face value," said Rand Fishkin, a well-known pioneer in the search engine optimization field and co-founder of search advisory firm Moz.

ComScore stands by its figures. Vice President of Marketing Andrew Lipsman said the data is not designed to measure where Web traffic goes, only the searching behavior of consumers. He added that comScore is working on integrating mobile device results into its data.

Microsoft said it had no reason to doubt comScore's figures. It added that it is committed to Bing, which is a core part of Microsoft's game console Xbox and its coming voice assistant on Windows phone. Bing also powers other companies' sites and devices, including Apple Inc's Siri and soon Apple desktop search. Bing is integrated into translation features on Facebook and Twitter.

Microsoft search advertising revenue rose 38 percent last quarter, helped by higher prices and more searches, it said in its last quarterly report, without disclosing dollar figures.

Microsoft's online services unit, which includes Bing, lost more than \$14 billion in Bing's first four years, including the cost of a failed acquisition. Last year, Microsoft put Bing in a new reporting group so its financial performance is obscured, but many on Wall Street assume Bing is still losing money.

Craig Beilinson, director of consumer communications at Microsoft, said it "continues to gain traction" as a standalone search engine and powering other companies' products.

While Bing has grown, that improvement has come mostly at the expense of

Yahoo, according to comScore figures. The combined share of Bing and Yahoo has risen less than one percentage point in five years, taking share from smaller competitors Ask.com and AOL Inc , not Google.

Some search marketers say they like having an alternative to Google, and that Bing/Yahoo can be a good investment for some clients.

"Clients that have an older demographic, we sometimes do better on Bing or Yahoo," said Pauline Jakober, founder of Group Twenty Seven, which advises mid-sized clients on paid search ad campaigns.

Business-to-business, like janitorial or industrial types, could do well on Bing, while tech clients might not even want to advertise on Bing, she said.

But Bing has drawn criticism from some investors because it is expensive to operate, requiring resources from engineers to server farms.

The new search data called into question Bing's usefulness, said Todd Lowenstein at HighMark Capital Management.

He and other investors believe Microsoft should focus on products that businesses pay for, such as the Office suite of products and the Windows operating system.

"Microsoft would be better served selling Bing to another player who can use the asset," he said.

Ironically, Google does not highlight this weakness any more than Microsoft.

"Google loves the fact that anybody other than Google looks like they are doing better," said Danny Sullivan, longtime industry observer and editor of the Search Engine Land blog. "It's a very handy tool for them to go out and say you don't need to be regulating us, look, the market's strong."

Google and Yahoo declined comment on the comScore data.

World's First Microchip Fails To Sell at Auction

The world's first microchip, handmade in 1958 by Jack Kilby at Texas Instruments, went up for auction this week, but bids failed to meet the reserve. This piece of history won Kilby a Nobel Prize and represents one of the first steps leading to the modern computing era.

A germanium wafer with gold wiring, mounted on a glass plate and embedded in a block of clear plastic, the first integrated circuit looks more than a little primitive, like a prehistoric insect preserved in amber.

Kilby, the creator of this electronic fossil, died in 2005 but not before seeing the technology he pioneered become ubiquitous and indispensable worldwide. The integrated circuit on a chip, later called a microchip, combined several functions and components of early computing machines, making smaller and more efficient constructions possible.

The invention was lauded as a major advance, and quickly advanced on by

others. It wasn't until 2000, however, that Kilby's work won him the Nobel Prize in physics.

The lot comprises the original 1958 prototype, a second early chip, and a letter from inventor Jack Kilby describing the process of creating them.

For auction at Christie's was not just the historic chip, but a second prototype built on a more stable silicon substrate, plus a 1964 written statement from Kilby describing the process of the invention.

Bids reached as high as \$850,000, but did not meet the reserve; Christie's estimated the lot would bring between \$1 million and \$2 million. What happens next is not clear we've reached out to the auction house for more details, and will update this article if they respond.

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